

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 962

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 8597

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: POV, SY
SUBJECT: DEATH OF SYRIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER YUSUF
SHAQRA

1. SYRIAN DEPFONMIN YUSUF SHAQRA, WHO ASSUMED HIS RESPONSIBILITIES IN DAMASCUS MFA IN EARLY 1976 AFTER ASSIGNMENT AS SYRIAN AMBASSADOR TO GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, DIED IN LONDON OF A BRAIN TUMOR ON DECEMBER 12.

2. HIS REPLACEMENT AS ONE OF TWO DEPFONMINS--OTHER IS ABD AL-GHANI RAF'AI--IS ABDULLAH AL-KHANI, WHO SERVED IN PREVIOUS CABINET OF MAHMUD AYYUBI AS MINISTER OF TOURISM. KHANI IS A CAREER DIPLOMAT AND HAS ALREADY ASSUMED HIS RESPONSIBILITIES. AMBASSADOR CALLED UPON KHANI OFTEN IN MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND FOUND HIM FULL OF CHARM AND CAUTION IN DISCUSSION OF POLITICAL TOPICS. HE HAS TAKEN OVER RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPERVISING WESTERN HEMISPHERE AND UN AFFAIRS. KHANI HAS GENERALLY SPOKEN WITH MODERATION IN HIS COMMENTS ON U.S.-SYRIAN RELATIONS AND U.S. EFFORTS TO REACH AN ARAB-ISRAELI SETTLEMENT.
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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